

ABSTRACT

The present invention relates to a processed berry product, in particular processed cranberry, more particularly a Russian cranberry (*Vaccinium oxycoccus*), which is so prepared that the fruit is infused with sugar but the original cranberry shape is maintained, and to processes and apparatuses for preparing such a processed berry product. A key step in preparing the cranberry is punching it with a tapered punch. Doing so allows sugar infusion while maintaining the shape of the cranberry. The tapered punch is a tubular rod having a diameter of about 2 to about 4 mm on the untapered end. One end of the rod is tapered to a sharp point. The length of the tapered end is about 1 to about 2 inches. The use of the tapered punch allows the Russian cranberry to maintain its form, allows for sugar infusion to take place, and after drying, results in a superior, higher moisture dried cranberry when compared to the dried North American cranberry.